

A
LECTURE

ON

FEMALE EDUCATION.

[Price ONE SHILLING and SIX-PENCE.]

LECTURE

OF

FEMALE EDUCATION

AND
THE
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A
L E C T U R E
O N T H E
Importance and Necessity
Of rendering the
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
A peculiar BRANCH of
FEMALE EDUCATION;

A N D

On the Mode of Instruction by which it may be
made subservient to the Purposes of improving
the Understanding, and of inculcating the
Precepts of RELIGION and VIRTUE.

As it was delivered at HICKFORD's Great Room
in Brewer-Street, May 4, 1772.

BY J. R I C E. 76

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEARSLEY, at No. 46, opposite Fetter-
Lane in Fleet-street. 1773.

Mrs. ELIZABETH TERRY
LECTURE

CAMPDEN HOUSE
Importance and Necessity
KENNINGTON

ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LECTURE
FEMALE EDUCATION

GRATEFUL INSCRIBED
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made interesting and the Purpose of improving
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Precepts of Religion and Virtue.



By J. R. I. C. E.
THE AUTHOR
LONDON
Printed by G. Kearsley, at the 'Athenaeum' Press, No. 1, Pall Mall East.

TO
MRS. ELIZABETH TERRY,
OF
CAMPDEN HOUSE,
KENSINGTON,

THIS
LECTURE

IS
GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HER MOST OBEDIENT

AND MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

TO
MISS ELIZABETH TERRY

CAMPDEN HOUSE

P R E F A C E

I would be an unpardonable neglect
to the writer of the following
did he not make his grateful acknow-
ledgements for the politeness and favour with
which it was received, by a very numerous
and very respectable audience; more es-
pecially, as it was by no means designed
for so public an exhibition, and, consequent-
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that are generally expected in an entertain-
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many obstacles occurred to defeat that in-
tention, and the persons to whom the au-
thor had promised to read it, were so
pressing.

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IT would be an unpardonable neglect in the writer of the following lecture, did he not make his grateful acknowledgments for the politeness and favour with which it was received, by a very numerous, and very respectable audience; more especially, as it was by no means designed for so public an exhibition, and, consequently, would not admit of the embellishments that are generally expected in an entertainment of that kind. It was originally intended to be spoken only to the parents of his pupils, and in a private way: but so many obstacles occurred to defeat that intention, and the persons to whom the author had promised to read it, were so

b pressing

-pressing for the performance, that no other
 expedient could be found to gratify their
 wishes, and fulfil His promise, than, at a
 very short notice, to deliver it at the Concert
 Room in Brewer-street. It is now pub-
 lished, from the same view with which it
 was written. He wished to give his friends
 a more accurate idea, than has hitherto been
 entertained, of the utility and extent of a
 much neglected branch of education; that,
 for a considerable number of years, he has
 laboured to promote, and to improve. And
 he is not without hope, that as his endea-
 vours to facilitate the cultivation of the
 minds and manners of the fair sex, have not
 been wholly unsuccessful, the present pub-
 lication may animate more ingenious men
 to turn their thoughts that way, and to strike
 out some methods of improvement still more
 efficacious than those his experience has hi-
 therto enabled him to discover or to pursue.
 No other motive could justify the present
 publication, than a sincere desire of contri-
 buting

buting, not merely to the public amusement, but to the public good. The author is willing, therefore, to waive all pretensions to that degree of elegance of stile and brilliancy of expression, which are, by some, supposed to be the only tests of literary merit in the present times; and shall think himself sufficiently rewarded, if what he has said may be, in the smallest degree, subservient to the purposes for which it was intended. In the course of near twenty years labour in his profession, the author has been too frequently a witness to the agonizing reflections of parents, who, upon taking their daughters from school, have found them not only exceedingly deficient in the common qualifications, which are the objects of female education, but entirely destitute of every intellectual acquirement that could enable them to fulfil, with propriety, the several relative and social duties of life. By being early taught the art of stifling, instead of correcting, their passions,

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they have been observed to be secretly malicious and vindictive. By never daring to give their opinions ingenuously (indeed from having none to give) they have been found to substitute silence and reserve, for modest bashfulness, and delicacy of deportment; and by being instructed only in the external modes of etiquette and ceremony, they have been total strangers to that engaging freedom and openness of manners: which are the true and genuine characteristics of good breeding, and a good heart: And, what is worst of all, contented in their ignorance; submitting with reluctance to any attempts for the improvement of their understandings, which may deprive them of part of the time, that they had been taught to hope, should be spent in pleasurable dissipation, as soon as they were taken from under the care of their governesses. Will this picture be thought exaggerated? It is to be feared, that there are too many fathers and mothers in the kingdom, who,
from

P R E F A C E. iii

from sad experience, are convinced that the
 writer might have heightened the descrip-
 tion, till it became almost too dreadful for
 the public eye. (they have none to give) from
 having none to give, for
 found to substitute silence and reserve, for
 modest bashfulness, and delicacy of deport-
 ment; and by being instructed only in the
 fashion to stile the present age, the author
 is not without hope, that his present at-
 tempt to delineate a mode of instruction,
 calculated to render the love of virtue and
 knowledge the *leading* objects in education,
 will not be without its use. He is persuaded,
 that there are many worthy persons, who
 would be glad to prefer a scheme of educa-
 tion designed to improve the mind by cul-
 tivating the powers of reason and reflection,
 to that, which almost universally prevails, of
 polishing the person, by the acquisition of
 the external graces of deportment, at the
 expence both of the head and heart. To
 such persons, therefore, wherever, or how-
 ever situated, his work may be of some use;
 either
 from

P R E F A C E.

either by pointing out a mode of improvement that has been pursued with success, and which may be privately put in practice; or by informing them, by what means the errors of a defective education, that have been imbibed in one school, may, in a considerable degree, be rectified in another.

In the most degenerate times there have sprung up some few illustrious characters, as if to shame mankind into goodness, by the brightness of their virtues, and recall them from the paths of vice and folly, by the force of their example. And perhaps there may not be wanting, in the present age, some noble and enlightened spirits, who, animated by a sincere desire of contributing to the good of society, may step forth, and by their countenance and example, assist in reforming the present modes of instruction, and in rescuing both sexes from the slavish and absurd dominion of pedantry,

pedantry, formality, and ignorance. The way is sufficiently open. The advantages to be derived from a change in the present mode, sufficiently obvious to justify the attempt: and that it is not an impracticable scheme, can be proved by the clearest demonstration of what has been already done, silently, and almost unobserved by the world. The writer is proud to say, that he has many such demonstrative proofs to give of the good effects which have resulted from the pursuit of the plan recommended in the ensuing sheets, that malice itself could neither impugn or deny; and which he should be happy to display to the world, whenever a proper occasion may justify him in so doing. As it is, the letters and essays of his scholars, on a variety of subjects, are well known, and spread, from hand to hand, into almost every corner of the kingdom. They have proved, that it is possible for a woman to think justly, and to express herself in writing accurately and elegantly, in

her

her own language, without being indebted
for her ability to the knowledge of a for-
eign, or a dead one. It is proposed, that
she should be employed in conducting any school in the king-
dom. There is, however, yet ample room for
improvement, should it become the taste
of the public to enquire into the present
methods of instruction, and to patronize
the labours of those who may dedicate their
talents to this very important subject. There
never was a period of time, in which an
attention to this article was more necessary
to the interests of virtue and religion. E-
very man is willing to pay largely for the
education of his children; and the schools
for that purpose are almost innumerable.
The Governesses of each, in the accustomed
phrases of the profession, promise to take
great care of the morals of those committed
to their charge—And it is but charitable
to think, that, as far as their abilities will
permit, they keep their word. Yet it is
something extraordinary that the world has
not

standing, proposed as the model to be pursued, in conducting any school in these kingdoms. It is not, indeed, a task so easy as to be performed by every woman (how ignorant and reproachable soever in her private conduct) who undertakes the business of education. Few possess the natural and acquired qualifications, necessary to govern and form the minds of others. And fewer still are to be met with, who can have any tolerable idea of them, from the course of their education—and therefore can rarely be expected to acquire them in the bustle and continual avocations of a public school.

The Government of each, in the accustomed manner, is by no means intended that the writer should be understood to insinuate a design, or even a wish of overturning, but merely of improving the present system of education. He means to superadd to what is already taught in our schools, not to abridge it of any valuable or genteel

accomplishment. It is true, that the present lecture was adapted solely to the purposes of *female* education; from a consciousness how unavailing any attempts to extend that of the *other sex* would prove. Yet the judicious reader will readily perceive with how small an alteration the present plan might be rendered equally beneficial to *both* sexes. It will not therefore, it is hoped, be received as a mark of fond partiality to the profession he exercises, if the author introduces an observation, not indeed new, but not sufficiently attended to. It is but too common to confound the idea of a *Grammarian* with that of a mere *School-Master*. They are, however, very different in their respective functions.

The business of a schoolmaster, even in the greatest schools of learning, generally goes no farther than teaching the elementary parts of language; reading, syntax, parsing, and the like preparatory points of initiation; which are, in a great measure, indif-

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indispensable: and yet, in the course of these, much might be spared (even with advantage) in the present practice of the schools, to the uselessly fatigued memory of children. Schoolmasters then may, with great propriety, be said to be so far useful, as they smooth the way for the office of the grammarian, which takes the children up at the point that the schoolmasters will have left them, as the schoolmaster will have done at the point of their being turned over to him from the tuition of the nurses. Where the schoolmaster then ends, the grammarian begins. His office is a much more considerable one; as the superstructure, which supposes the foundations, is still more regarded than the foundations themselves. It could not indeed exist without them; but it is for the sake of the superstructure that those are laid: and when they are promisingly laid, what a pity it is they should be left without suitable erections on them! The great business then of the grammarian, is to form his pupils to the

talents of reading, writing, and speaking, with grace and propriety; their own language in particular. He will not only lead them to understand thoroughly the *sense*, but to relish the *beauties* of poetry, and enter into the great *utility* of *history*. He will at once guard them against the dangers of a *false* taste, and inculcate a *true* one. There is at that age, so strong a natural vivacity, always favourable and inclined to truth and rectitude, that it is absolutely more easy for them to receive the impressions of a good taste than a bad one. In youth, a rectitude of ideas is even an instinct. Most of its errors in science or morality, are generally the effect of an education neglected, or depraved.

Nothing, however, is more strictly true than that the importance of the Grammarian's Office was perfectly understood among the Greeks and Romans. Diogenes Laertius, attributes to one of the greatest philo-

philosophers the first assumption of the title of Grammarian; and Dionysius Halicarnassius attests, that Plato valued himself much on his having cultivated the Grammarian's art. These are characters that certainly convey no idea of *pedantry*; nor is there any distinction between the philosopher, and the grammarian, except that this last *teaches*, what the other contents himself with *being*, the man of letters.

The Romans, of the first distinction especially, were so thoroughly persuaded of the utility of grammarians, that they constantly committed the finishing of the education of their children to their care. By them they were instructed in style, and in the eloquence proper to the bar and to the senate. In short, the polish of literature, the elegance of conversation, and purity of morals, essentially belonged to their province. It was, also, with great propriety (since surely there is nothing incompatible in

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in the characters) that the schoolmaster often engrafted on his profession that of the grammarian; a graduation which was one of the most useful in literature. That they were distinct functions, however, is plain, not only from the respective nature of them, but from the chronology of their reception in Rome and Italy; where there were schoolmasters from all known antiquity, and no grammarians, till in the third century before our Saviour's æra, when the Romans adopted both the profession, and the denomination, from the Greeks. In this nation, neither have hitherto, at least, formally and explicitly obtained. To this if it should be answered, that the universities are supposed to exercise the functions attributed to the grammarian, in their finishing the education of the schools, it would be indecent, and appear invidious in the writer, to liquidate their just pretensions and claims to that office: But this, I dare hope, will not be contested, that not only, in cases of accomplishing

completing a female education, in points entirely competent, and at once *graceful* and *useful* to that sex, it cannot so well be obtained, as from the assistance of a grammarian; but even there are many justly supposable circumstances and situations, in which young gentlemen, debarred from a recourse to the universities, may, to great advantage for resuming neglected studies, or for improvement in stile, oratory, philosophy, and the formation both of head and heart, employ the assistance of a grammarian.

neither have hitherto, at least, formally and explicitly obtained. To this it should be answered, that the universities are supposed to exercise the functions attributed to the grammarian, in their finishing the education of the schools, it would be indecent, and appear invidious in the writer, to disavow their just pretensions and claims to that office: But this, I dare hope, will not be contested, that not only, in cases of accomplishing

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the improvement in the various philoso-

FEMALE EDUCATION.

which employ the assistance of a grammar.

P A R T I.

THE benefits and advantages which re-

sult from a good education, are so con-

fessedly great and important, both to

public and private happiness, that mankind, in

all ages, have thought it an object deserving the

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A
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PART I.

THE benefits and advantages which result from a good education, are so confessedly great and important, both to public and private happiness, that mankind, in all ages, have thought it an object deserving the highest regard and attention, as one of the principal sources of the national welfare, security, and glory. The universality of this opinion is a sufficient proof of its truth. The variety of books which have been written to facilitate the cultivation of the mind, and the improvement of its faculties, at the same time

B

that

that they demonstrate the importance of the discussion, are so many convincing proofs that mankind are not agreed concerning the means of instruction most proper to that end; and that the subject is far from having been exhausted.

Indeed, upon reflection, it will appear, that in every kingdom the mode of instruction must necessarily alter, as it advances in power, wealth, and fame. In the infancy of all states, the education has been calculated rather to render the people *virtuous* than *polite*. To inculcate, therefore, in the minds of youth, the knowledge and love of virtue and their country, has, in all such states, held the highest rank; and with these have subordinately concurred the acquisitions of skill and vigour in athletic exercises, and the arts of war. Rigid temperance, contempt of riches, invincible courage, and austerity of manners, were the characteristics of the male part of the species; while the softer sex, occupied entirely in domestic duties, could acquire no knowledge of those refinements which are so essentially requisite in the behaviour of a well bred woman, in a state of greater civilization.

The

The extent of our commerce and dominions, together with the vast increase of wealth, which has deluged these kingdoms within this last century, have contributed not a little to produce an alteration in the manner of educating our young ladies of birth and fashion: and it is to an improvement on the present mode, that I request the favourable attention of my audience.

I beg leave, however, to premise, that I do not intend to enter upon a full enquiry into the present state of education, in all its branches; or invidiously to point out the defects of any particular system that obtains; but merely to give a plain and rational account of the improvements that have been made in one particular branch; to take off the force of some prejudices, which owe their birth to the very limited idea at present entertained of utility and extent of them; and to offer to the public consideration some advantages which may justly be supposed to result from them.

I shall, therefore, treat of a good education only so far as the cultivation of our own language may be conducive to it: and, as the elucidation of my subject will lay me under the

necessity of mentioning methods of instruction, that, to the best of my knowledge, have not been *publicly* practised by any other person; I must entreat the candid allowance of my auditors for any thing in the following discourse, that may seem to favour of egotism, vanity, or self-sufficiency.

That too little encouragement has been given to the cultivation and improvement of our language, is a complaint which has been reiterated, from age to age, by some of the wisest and most learned men this kingdom has produced; and several public attempts have been made to introduce the study of it into our schools and seminaries of learning; which, however, have all miscarried; and this seems to have been owing more to the extravagant notions entertained and recommended to the people, of the great national advantages which were to accrue from thence, than from any backwardness or indisposition in them, to assist in promoting any *practicable* scheme of that kind that might have been offered. It was proposed only as an aid to the revival of the ancient eloquence, and as it might serve to qualify us for the acquisition of the arts of oratory and *declamation*; without sufficiently
adverting

adverting to the wide difference between the manners of ancient and modern times, and the little necessity, or even possibility, that subsists, of successfully practising the same modes of persuasion, among a learned and scientific people, as were in use in less improved states, wherein wisdom could only be attained by the superior class of citizens, while the populace were involved in stupidity and ignorance.

But, notwithstanding the ill success of these schemes of rendering us a nation of orators, and confining the study of our language to that single point; the more intelligent part of mankind were awakened to the consideration of the very negligent and imperfect manner in which it was taught in our schools; and that some advantages might accrue to society, if any method was fallen upon to give our youth a more extensive knowledge of the language, and of the arts of reading and of writing it, than was any where followed or put in practice: there being, *at that time*, but one man in the kingdom who *publicly* exercised that profession; and who, from the unassuming novelty of the attempt, and the little attention paid to those arts, was very little known.

Time,

Time, however, and the repeated proofs that have been given of the proficiency to which many of his fair pupils have attained, in reading and writing their own language with propriety and elegance, have convinced many worthy persons, that a much greater progress in both may be made under his instruction, than by any methods commonly practised: yet there have not been wanting some so extremely incredulous, as to suppose it utterly impossible that ladies so young as those at boarding-schools generally are, should be capable of writing with such facility and correctness as they have been said to do, upon subjects apparently above the comprehension of persons at their time of life; or that they should be enabled to understand our most classical English authors, with the precision and accuracy requisite to express their sentiments with any tolerable degree of elegance and propriety.

To refute opinions of this kind, as well as to render his methods of instruction more generally known and understood, he has taken this opportunity of explaining them to his friends, and to the public, and of appealing, not only to the suitableness of the means employed to effect

those ends, but to the testimony of so many witnesses as are now around him, for the truth of what he shall advance concerning them. He hopes it will appear, that his mode of instruction is attended with effects more advantageous and extensive, than have, in general, been comprehended; and, that in point of utility, it is at least equal, if not superior, to any other hitherto pursued.

The great end of education is to form the mind and manners of youth; and this is effected in two modes. 1st, By early inculcating such a knowledge of God and ourselves, as may tend to correct the vicious and depraved propensities of our Nature; and 2dly, by instructing us in such arts and accomplishments, as may render us useful or agreeable to our fellow-creatures. The latter may be attained by habit and industry, without any great exertion of the *mental* faculties, and are more or less necessary, in proportion to the rank or station of the person intended to be educated. The former can only be acquired by the cultivation and exertion of the *understanding* and the *judgment*; and are therefore, infinitely more necessary than the latter.

Hence

Hence it follows, that every system, or mode of education, is more or less perfect or defective, in proportion as the cultivation of the understanding, and the improvement of the heart, are more or less attended to, or neglected.

It has, however, been a general complaint, that whatever pains may be taken in the early part of life, to inspire us with a love for the arts and sciences, or to instruct us in those accomplishments which may render us agreeable to our fellow-creatures: it is by no means true, that the same assiduity is employed to give us just notions of God and ourselves, or to teach us the several relative or social duties: but that the heart is left to mere impulse, or chance for direction, in the most important and momentous, as well as the most ordinary concerns of life.

Of the propriety of this complaint, parents must be left to judge for themselves: that it is not a new one, the following quotation from a very respectable author, will be a proof; at the same time that it serves very essentially to elucidate my present subject.

Mr.

In Mr. Mason's introduction to his excellent
 Treatise on the Benefits and Advantages of Self-
 Knowledge, says, that it has often occurred to my
 mind, in digesting my thoughts on this sub-
 ject, what a pity it is, that this most useful
 science should be so generally neglected in the
 modern methods of education; and that pre-
 ceptors and tutors, both in public, and pri-
 vate seminaries of learning, should forget,
 that the forming the *manner* is more necessary
 to a qualified education, than the furnishing
 the *mind* of youth. Socrates, who made all
 his philosophy subservient to morality, was of
 this sentiment; and took more pains to rec-
 tify the *temper*, than replenish the *understand-*
ings of his pupils; and looked upon all
 knowledge as useless speculation, that was
 not brought to this end, to make us wiser
 and better men: and, without doubt, if, in
 the academy, the youth has once learned the
 art of governing his passions, managing his
 temper, and guarding his foibles, he will find
 more solid advantages in after life, than he
 could expect from an acquaintance with all the
 ancient or modern systems of philosophy."

This gentleman, however, it is evident, considered the want of attention to this article, only as it affected the welfare of men. Little or no notice of it has been taken, as it respects the education and happiness of the fair sex; though certainly, it is of equal importance to society, that each should receive every advantage that might result from it. An opinion, indeed, has been advanced, that the public education of a lady, has only for its object, the instructing her in such arts and accomplishments as are immediately befitting her sex and rank: That the governesses of boarding-schools do not consider the cultivation of the heart or understanding, as any part of their office; and that it is always supposed, a young lady can have no better instructor, in points of such consequence, than a mother, or some female relation or friend, who will take the necessary pains to open her mind to the knowledge of those duties and obligations, which are to fit her for her entrance into the great world, in the several relations in which she is to stand to God and her fellow-creatures.

It is to be hoped, however, for the honour of human nature, that this observation is not strictly just; and that, although no regular method of forming the mind to virtue, as yet generally obtains,

obtains, more pains and attention are nevertheless bestowed upon this article, than what are barely necessary to check the propensities to vice or folly: for the may, indeed, be said to have been but ill educated, who does not know that she was not sent into this world merely to avoid evil, but to do good.

Were the before-mentioned assertion literally true, how dreadful, to a thinking mind, must be the situation of those young ladies, who are sent from our colonies, or from remote parts of the kingdom, to be educated in or near the metropolises; and who, from various causes, may not be so happy as to have, or may be deprived of the assistance of such female relation or friend, sufficiently qualified to take upon them the arduous task of correcting the heart, and improving the understanding.

Be this, however, as it may, it will, I believe, be generally allowed, that the present methods of educating our young ladies, are not so fully calculated to answer that end, as to preclude all attempts at improvement; but that such as may appear to be well founded, will be received with candour and regard.

It is by no means intended to lay it down as a maximo, that the instructing youth in the accurate knowledge of grammar, or the teaching them to read with propriety, will necessarily induce the knowledge and love of virtue. This would be highly absurd indeed; since it is a melancholy truth, that men and women are too frequently to be found tolerably skilled in the former, without any just knowledge of, or love for the latter; but merely to point out by what means, and in what degree, the teaching young ladies the practical knowledge of their own language, may be made *subservient* to that end. * And that we may have a more orderly view of this subject, we will consider the mode of teaching separately from the use which may be made of it. And first, of the art of reading.

On entering upon this subject, I find myself under no small difficulty, as it probably may be expected of me, that I should treat *minutely* of the methods by which I teach: but this is utterly impossible. The subject itself is so extensive, that a full discussion of it would take up more time than the present occasion would by any means admit of. Besides, I must beg leave to remind my audience, that, as I before declared,

clared, I did not intend to treat of a good education, but only so far as the knowledge of our own language is conducive to it. In treating of the art of reading, I have only in view to consider the principal articles which a master in that profession ought to be well skilled in, and attentive to.

By teaching, then, the knowledge of a language, is here to be understood, the enabling a scholar to read it with elegance and propriety, and to write it with facility and precision.

“ * By the art of reading, is meant the art of pronunciation in general, or that of intelligibly and emphatically repeating or rehearsing what is written.

“ This art, as here defined, may, at first view, seem very easily attainable. On a very little reflection, however, it will be discerned, that the narrative of the historian, the descriptions of the poet, and the declamations of the orator, are not to be *intelligibly* repeated without some portion of the respective sense and spirit of each.

* Introduction to the Art of Reading with Energy and Propriety, by J. Rice.

A mere

A mere audible recital of the words of an author, as it may be made by a person who does not *understand* what he says, so it may be made also in such manner, as not to be understood by those who *bear* him; and if not totally *unintelligible*, be, at least, but *imperfectly*, or *falsely* understood: whereas, the art of reading, consists in conveying to the hearer, the *whole meaning* of the writer.

To this end, it is evidently necessary that the reader himself should *understand* what he reads, before he can possibly repeat it *intelligibly* to others: all men being understood to *say*, what they appear to *mean*, rather than what they *literally* utter. Now, as the reader has no other means of conveying the sense of the writer, than by vocal utterance or pronunciation; so these means are the least equivocal of all others; and the surest criterion of a clear understanding in the one, and precision of expression in the other.

It is very certain, however, that there are persons of most excellent understandings, and who perfectly comprehend what they read, and

yet

yet are incapable of audibly conveying to others the meaning they so well understand; and this, not from any ignorance of language, or defect in their faculties of speech, but for want of having cultivated them by an attention to the art in question.

Reading may, with propriety, be called artificial speaking; as it is, indeed, the imitation of natural eloquence. Hence, like all other imitative arts, its end is defeated by every appearance of study, peculiar habit, or affectation: any peculiarity of tone, or manner of reading, therefore, must be disgusting, as it is *unnatural*. It is, nevertheless, very certain, that there are few common readers who have not a disagreeable habitual tone; and this is principally owing to the commonly prevailing neglect, of teaching children to articulate with accuracy and precision: by which is meant, the giving every letter in a syllable, and every syllable in a word, its due proportion of sound; so that they may be conveyed to the ear sufficiently audible and distinct." Trifling as this circumstance may appear, it is nevertheless the very *foundation* of all excellence

cellence in reading, and yet is so little observed in the common methods of teaching, that I can with truth aver, I have not met with one scholar in twenty, who is not more or less defective in the pronunciation of words, which is generally

The want of care in this respect is also the parent of most of the ill habits of pronunciation, which are so difficult to conquer, and sometimes utterly impossible, totally to subvert, such as lisping, hesitating, stammering, moulting, clattering, speaking through the nose, and with the teeth shut, and many others, to which I may add, some very ingrained habits, merely personal; such as winking, nodding, frowning, staring, and occasional coughing.

To remove these imperfections, the master should be particularly attentive to the defects of each pupil, and should adapt his rules accordingly; which should be founded on the intimate knowledge of the formation of each sound in the language, and the situation and appulse of the organs necessary to produce it; without which, any attempts of that kind must necessarily do more harm than good. Nor is he to satisfy

satisfy himself with barely laying down the rules; he must see that they be reduced to practice.

There are also certain barbarisms of speech to be guarded against, which so generally obtain among all ranks of persons in this kingdom, as to be one reason why the language is supposed, by foreigners, to be harsh and untunable, in a much greater degree than it really is: I mean the manner of sounding some of the vowels, and of articulating certain combinations of consonants; not only contrary to the true powers of the letters; but also to the custom of the best speakers; the only criterion to which we can appeal.

The instances of this sort that might be given, are almost innumerable: but some of the most striking shall be mentioned, viz. the sounding one vowel for another, as *a* for *e*, in the word *melancholy*, generally pronounced *malancholly*; *i* for *e*, as in *get*, *yet*; pronounced *git*, *yit*; *e* for *i*, as *set*, for *sit*; *oo*, for *u*, as in the words, *tune*, *tube*, *produce*, *tumult*; generally called *toon*, *took*, *prodooce*, *toomult*; likewise in using one mode of articulation for another; as *tch* for

t; in the words nature, fortune, virtue, covetous, beauteous, furniture; generally pronounced *nattbure, fortbune, virtbue, butcheous, covetckus, furnitchure*; sometimes *j*, or soft *g*, for *d*; as in the words, subdued, tremendous, comedians, immediate, grandeur, gradual; called *subjewed, tremenjous, comamegiants, immeigate, granjure, gradjual*.

The neglect of properly pronouncing the letter *r*, upon the just articulation of which, the force and energy of our language so much depend, is a fault too common not to be taken notice of. It may, perhaps, appear something strange to assert, that though it is one of the most powerful consonants, it is, notwithstanding, as generally mispronounced as the *v*; the hackneyed opprobrium of a cockney pronunciation. They, however, who will give themselves the trouble to attend to it, will find, that altho' when it *begins* a word, it may be generally articulated, it seldom is, when it falls in the *middle*, or at the *latter end* of one. Thus the following line,

Arms,

Arms, and the man I sing, who first by fate

would be pronounced

AAMS, and the man I sing, who FUST by fate—

Nor is the aspirate *b* more accurately sounded; particularly when it follows the *w*. Thus the words, *what, when, where, why whither, whether, which*, are usually called WAT, WEN, WERE, WY, WITHER, WETHER, WITCH: And the following sentence—*Why, what signifies talking? whether the weather be fair or not, I will go when, and whither I please!* would be pronounced in this manner, WY WAT signifies talking? WETHER the WEATHER be fair or not, I will go WEN and WITHER I please.

These, and many other improprieties, that corrupt the speech, must be subdued, before a firm and just articulation can be attained: and to effect this, is one of the most laborious tasks a master or scholar can have to struggle with; both because it is difficult to break the force of long acquired habit, and because it requires an attention but ill suited to the natural sprightliness and levity of youth.

Nor will his care, in this article, end here. While he is establishing a *just*, or correcting a *vicious* mode of articulation, he should, also, be particularly careful to overcome the *personal* ill habits before mentioned, which are not only very ungraceful, but divert the mind of the hearer, from the *sense* of what is read. It cannot be employed upon two distinct operations at the same time, and it is impossible to listen seriously to a reader, while his forced and unnatural motions, or gesticulations, are for ever soliciting attention.

And, as it may appear, to give children a *just* articulation, or to correct a bad one (and, indeed, too great an idea of the labour and attention necessary, can hardly be conceived) yet this must be done before it can be expected that the scholar should make any considerable proficiency in the art of reading; at least, so far as an *elegant manner* is concerned. As it is, therefore, the *foundation* of the art he professes to teach, it will require the utmost exertion of the master's skill, sagacity, and assiduity.

When the scholar has acquired an articulation tolerably just, he should be led to the confide-

ration of the *manner* in which *whole sentences* should be pronounced; and this comprehends the *strength and modulation*, together with the *improvement and management of the voice*, and the *nature and use of the points or stops in reading*.

An *harmonious well managed voice* is to sublime or delicate sentiments, *what elegance of dress is to a fine person*: it is at once an ornament and recommendation. I know of no *personal qualification* that more strongly characterizes the *gentlewoman*: there being generally to be observed in women who have not had the benefit of a good education, a *vulgarity of tone*, (as well as manner of expressing themselves) that is very apparent to persons of discernment; and which not all the advantages of dress, or polite deportment, can conceal.

One great cause of that disagreeable tone in reading, which so generally prevails, takes its rise from the *unnatural elevation* of the voice, which is acquired under the direction of ignorant, or negligent masters, in the early part of life; who, to make their scholars read out, as it

is called, oblige them to *bawl* in a pitch above the natural voice.

This is much more observable, however, in the education of boys than girls; who more generally fall into the opposite error, of reading too much *below* the necessary pitch, to render the voice *distinct*, and sufficiently *audible*; which indistinctness is also encreased by the timidity and delicacy natural to the sex. Many of whom are apt to suppose, that it is *masculine* to read loud enough to be distinctly heard from one end of a room to the other. — There are others, however, of more robust constitutions, and less delicate texture, whose voices are naturally strong, sometimes masculine; and these, under the influence of bad instruction, read every thing in the same boisterous manner, without feeling or delicacy. Defects so different, require different management. As the one is, by degrees, to be raised to strength, the other is so to be exercised, as to be rendered capable of modulation, and brought to a due degree of harmony and sweetness.

The other ill habits of clattering, mouthng, hesitating, stammering, mumbling, speaking thick,

thick, through the nose, or with the teeth shut, may also be overcome by proper care and attention. Nothing will more contribute to this end, next to the acquiring a good articulation, than to prevent the pupil from reading *too fast*. This is not only the source of most of the before-mentioned defects; but of another infinitely more *pernicious*; namely, the precluding the mind from attending to the *sense* of what is read. She, who is only intent upon getting out of her mouth, with the utmost precipitation, the mere *sounds* of the words she reads, cannot possibly *understand* the meaning of them herself, nor render it *intelligible* to others. To this bad custom, perhaps, it may be owing, that there are to be found so many persons, who have spent the greatest part of their lives in reading, and yet seem to betray very few signs of having cultivated the *understanding*, or improved the *judgment*. To correct this precipitance, the pupil should be obliged regularly to observe every point or stop she meets with in the course of her reading, and to give it its full pause till the habit be conquered.

To this should succeed the knowledge of emphasis, and of the tones necessary to express the sentiment

sentiment presented to the eye, according to the passion, or affection, it is intended to raise in the mind; and to this end, the reading of blank verse writers will contribute in the highest degree; both because the language is more immediately addressed to the passions than that of prose, and because it requires a degree of force and energy to express it, of which the modest plainness of the latter will by no means admit. More attention must be exerted in the perusal of *such* authors, not only with respect to the utterance of the *emphatical* words, but also to the observance of the points or stops; without which, as these writers frequently use a *parenthetical* mode of expression, they would be utterly unintelligible.

So much has been already said concerning the necessity of a reader's being able to *understand* the *sense* of the author he reads, that there is no need of my entering upon the nature of emphasis, and the tones of voice necessary to express the several emotions of the mind; especially as that subject is treated of in my Essay on the Art of Reading. Let it suffice to observe, that without a competent knowledge of these, no
person

person can with propriety be said to *read* any language: these, therefore, must necessarily become the peculiar and immediate objects of the master's attention. With respect to the knowledge of grammar, however, more notice ought to be taken, particularly as to the manner in which it is taught, and because it requires a degree of

The knowledge of grammar is so necessary to the right understanding a language, that he who is not versed in the former, cannot be said to be master of the latter. Hence, the desire of every parent is, that their children should be taught the language *grammatically*. To this end, some grammar is put into their hands, which they are obliged to get by *rote*, till it be firmly impressed upon the *memory*: but the misfortune is, that children are not taught to apply the rules they have thus learnt to the purposes for which they learned them; and very few, indeed, are endued with sufficient strength of mind to do it without instruction. It is evident, that language must have been spoken and written, accurately and elegantly, before any grammar could have been formed; the rules of which were originally deduced from the works of the best writers.—It seems, therefore, to imply an absurdity, that children should be taught the

rules of *writing* a language, before they have acquired any knowledge of the *language itself*, or that they should be supposed capable of discerning the *grammatical differences* of words, while they are totally at a loss to express half of what they feel, or comprehend, for the want of the *words themselves*. Surely it should seem the most rational mode, to enable them to acquire a *stock of words*, before they are taught the differences between them, and the order in which they ought to be placed! When the mind is well stored with ideas, and words by which to express them, it will, with pleasure, endeavour to find some fit, or agreeable mode of arranging them. The more ideas we acquire, the more careful we become to mark their differences; and to deliver them so, as to prevent ambiguity or confusion, in the minds of those to whom we address ourselves, whether by speech or writing. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that it is useless labour, and a great *hinderance* to knowledge, to burthen the mind and memory with a set of rules, before there can be any occasion for the *use* of them. I believe I may venture to assert, that those who are most famed for grammatical precision, are more indebted for it to their own application to that study, after they were well acquainted with language,

language, than to the knowledge they had acquired of it during the time of their being at school.

I would not, however, be thought to condemn the teaching this science, by the *use of a grammar*, but only, what I conceive to be, the improper *mode* of doing it. It has been before observed, that children are not taught, and many, for want of strength of mind, are not able, to apply the rules laid down, to the objects for which they were given.—If, for instance, their grammar informs them, that a noun substantive is the name of a *thing*, as house, horse, man, &c. for want of having any conception of *abstract qualities*, or objects merely *intellectual*, if they apply the rule at all, it is only to material objects, or those of sense. Though they may have been brought to know, that *horse* is a substantive, and *white* an adjective, they are utterly at a loss to tell what part of speech *omnipresence*, or *insignificance* is, till they turn to their dictionary; and even then, from being incapable of making the distinction above-mentioned, cannot give a reason to justify them for so doing.

I could enlarge much on this subject, would the time admit of it; but as it will not, I must content myself with explaining my own method, which I submit to the consideration of the judicious; and shall be happy to receive any hint of defect in it, or improvement that may be made upon it: being well convinced, that it is far more noble to retract and forsake an error, than it is to persist in it, even if the whole world should agree to countenance and support it.

When, therefore, the pupil has acquired such a stock of ideas, and words, as to be capable of putting her thoughts on paper, on any little subject, she is led to the knowledge of the several sorts of words that are necessary to form a discourse: and this, not by obliging her to get any lessons by rote, but by *conversing* with her on the subject, and pointing them, severally, out in their order; giving clear definitions of each, and teaching her to compare them with the several parts of speech, that are proposed to her for a trial of her proficiency, from time to time; taking care to be assured, by a variety of trials, that she be well acquainted

acquainted with the first object proposed to her consideration, before we proceed to a second. This attained, the construction, position, and government of words, come next to be considered ; and the rules given to her on each head, are illustrated and explained by the mistakes that are found in the themes or exercises she writes in my absence. By this method I have been enabled to teach my scholars to write their own language with tolerable accuracy and precision. And that they may not be without resource, should they at any time wish to recover their knowledge of grammar, I have compiled a short and compendious system of the rules by which they have been instructed : and this they copy from my manuscript, the better to impress it on the memory.

I must now request the favour of a few minutes respite ; after which I shall proceed to explain in what manner the acquisition of the art of reading is to be applied to the more general purposes of education.

P A R T

P A R T II.

IN the former part of this Lecture, I endeavoured to explain what ought to be the principal objects of the master's attention, in teaching the art of reading; and by what methods he should proceed, to enable his scholar to attain the requisite qualifications of a good reader, or to overcome the habitual defects she may have acquired. It has been shewn, that to express a sentiment with propriety, we must *feel* it, that to feel it we must comprehend thoroughly the language in which it is delivered, and the sense or meaning of the writer. It must, therefore, be obvious on the slightest reflection, that the cultivation of the *understanding* and the improvement of the *judgment* must *precede*, or, at least, go *hand in hand*, with every attempt to make the scholar a *good reader*, in the *strict* sense of that term.

The consideration of the means by which this is to be effected, will necessarily lead me to the end I proposed to myself in this discourse, viz.
to

to shew how, and in what degree, the instructing young ladies in the practical knowledge of their own language, may be made *subservient* to their improvement in *religion* and *virtue*.

There are but two means by which knowledge is generally obtained, viz. by reading, and conversation: these, therefore, if united, and properly used, bid fair to effect every thing that can be expected from them.

As, in order to establish a firm articulation, such authors are to be made use of, who have written in the most simple and unadorned stile; so, in order to improve the understanding, such books should be first read, as treat of matters adapted to the capacity and age of the pupil; and which she may easily be brought to comprehend: and afterwards, such as rise, by just degrees, to the most perfect species of composition the language will afford.

Now no authors can be more proper for this purpose, than such as treat of the knowledge of ourselves, our various faculties, passions, and affections, the relation in which we stand to our Creator, Redeemer, and fellow-creatures; and, lastly,

lastly, ~~to be~~ ~~as~~ ~~the~~ ~~happinefs~~ ~~are~~ ~~were~~ ~~designed~~
for, and ~~to be~~ ~~obtained~~ in. These are subjects
that may easily be comprehended by persons of
the most moderate capacity, and upon which
scarcely any thing can be said, but what may be
applied immediately to their own hearts.*

It may perhaps be objected here, that the science of
self-knowledge being the most complicated and most diffi-
cult to attain, seems better calculated for the study of adult
than of young persons. It appears, therefore, as if I had
begun my plan where I should have left off. To this it may
be answered, that the difficulty of the science, and the very
great importance of it, is a reason, why it should be one of
the first the mind should be employed upon. For ignorance
and inexperience every science is complicated and obscure,
though not in an equal degree—but certainly those which
relate to our own personal concerns are the least so. Indeed,
it is a misfortune common to me, with other persons con-
cerned in education, to have no elementary books, written
in a style and method sufficiently simple and perspicuous for
improving and directing the first dawnings of reason and
reflection, and therefore I was under a necessity of making
choice of Mr. Malon's Tract, which seemed most proper, on
account of the plainness of his style, and the variety of
thoughts and sentiments in him, level with the capacity of
youth. Besides, my method of instruction depending less on
that book than on myself, leaves me at liberty to use those
parts only which are for my purpose, and to omit or pass
slightly over others which require time and experience to
apprehend.

To this purpose, I made choice of a little tract upon the necessity and importance of self-knowledge, written by Mr. Malton; In which I am at a loss, whether I ought most to admire the candid spirit of Christianity that shines thro' the whole work, the simplicity of the language, or the perspicuity of the method in which he has arranged so extensive and complicated a subject; whereby every branch of it is brought before the mind in such order, as to avoid the least ambiguity and confusion; and all this, in a manner so pleasing, so grateful to the restless curiosity of the mind to know, that it seems hardly possible to read it, with any tolerable degree of attention, without becoming the wiser, and the better.

When this author has been once or twice perused, and the minds of the pupils have, in some degree, acquired a habit of attention and reflection, the *Seasons* of Mr. Thomson are given them to read, as a preparative to the more sublime species of poetry, from the pleasure which must necessarily result from an acquaintance with his works. In this author they meet with the most accurate descriptions of the various sea-

tions, and their effects, in the different regions of
 the habitable globe. Scenes of rural life, which,
 at once, serve to delight and enlarge the imagi-
 nation, are interspersed with moral tales, senti-
 ments, and reflections, favourable to humanity
 and universal benevolence. If Thomson was not
 only a poet, but a philosopher; and therefore
 his *Seasons*, which properly explained, seem well
 calculated to inspire the young mind with a
 thirst for knowledge. And the ease and har-
 mony of his numbers, the precision of his lan-
 guage, the elegant turn of his expression, and
 the variety and justness of his imagery, contri-
 bute equally to incite pleasure in his reader, and
 to give him a just taste for poetical style and
 composition. The philosophic remarks, with
 which he every where abounds, open a wide
 field for the master to expatiate on, in explaining
 to his pupils what they have read: which will
 not only enlarge their comprehension, by intro-
 ducing a number of new and entertaining ideas,
 but likewise supply them with a sufficient stock
 of apt and significant words. And no author
 seems to have possessed a greater variety, or to
 have been more happy in the choice of them.

The pupil is next introduced to an acquaintance with the *Night Thoughts* of Dr. Young, who excels Mr. Thomson in sublimity of style, strength, and variety of numbers; as well as the importance of the subjects, immortality, life, death, and immorality. If Thomson is happy in the choice and arrangement of the diction, he is the scribe, and the precision of his language; the excellent tendency and sublime morals of Young will atone for his splendid defects, while pointing out of which may very usefully make a part of the formation of taste. If the former has brought before the mind, the most beautiful images of nature, to awaken and expand the imagination, the latter has introduced to our view whatever is grand and marvellous, through the medium of images very fit to strike forcibly the young mind. If the one warmly inculcates the excellence of morality, and the doctrine of universal benevolence; the other leads us at once to the source of all the Christian virtues, and the obligations that men are under to practise them; not only from their superiority over those of the Pagan world, but from the immediate tendency they have of teaching us to anticipate the happiness of which we were created capable, even on this side the grave.

Dr. Young, however, is not more remarkable for the sublimity of his metaphysics, than for the conciseness of his expressions. He is, perhaps, too full of antitheses, but his so concentrated his sense (if I may be allowed so to express myself) that without a strict attention to the grammatical construction of his language, it is sometimes difficult to discern his meaning. This, in some little degree, renders his language obscure; but then this, though certainly a fault, may be turned to the advantage of the learner, whose penetration is thereby exercised, and rewarded with the sense discovered; which is ever morally excellent. The more pains, therefore, a young lady takes to understand the meaning of a good author, the deeper impression it will make, and consequently the more amply repay her for her trouble.

From this author, the transition to the Paradise Lost of the divine Milton (one of the most perfect compositions any language can boast of,) is natural and easy, in whom, as Thomson his admirer, justly observes, is met

judgment. The stile, simple, perspicuous, and majestic, the sentiments admirably adapted to each

last, however, is not more remarkable
 for the sublime and majestic style, than
 the concise and simple manner in which
 the subject is treated. In the first
 of blowing Eden fair, I have been
 pressed myself, that without a strict attention to
 the subject, which is so generally
 it is sometimes difficult to discern his meaning.
 This is a little more than renders his lan-
 guage obscure, but then this is a fault, which
 a fault may be turned to the advantage of the
 learner, whose penetration is thereby exercised,
 and rewarded with the noble discovery, which
 leads to proper notions of the infinite justice,
 mercy, and grace of the Creator; and to im-
 press upon it a detestation of vice and immora-
 lity, by exhibiting the dreadful effects of the
 apostacy of our first parents, and the unbounded
 love of God, in providing us with the means of
 restoration to his favour and acceptance. Here
 is to be found every collected beauty and excel-
 lence, that the most exalted mind, or improved
 talents, can produce; whether we consider the
 poem as having a tendency to delight the ima-
 gination, refine the passions, or improve the
 judgment. The style, simple, perspicuous, and
 majestic; the sentiments admirably adapted to
 the

the persons the author describes, and expressive
of their characters and situation; the language,
equal to his subject, elegant, and nervous; yet
pure and correct, as to be intelligible to the
meanest capacity.

This is the last author made use of: not be-
cause I think there is no necessity for any other,
but because the very little time allotted for the
ladies being under my instruction, will not ad-
mit of a greater variety.

of education will permit I have ever made use
of their own hearts the principal point to which
I have now gone through the characters of
the several authors, by the use of which my
pupils are instructed in the knowledge of their
own language, I hope it will be allowed they
are well chosen for that purpose, and for awak-
ening in their minds a sense of religion and vir-
tue, and that so far, at least, they are conser-
vative to a good education. It is frequently seen,
that the acquisition of arts and sciences serves to
render us vain, and to exalt that pride, which
is the disgrace and opprobrium of our nature.
Self-knowledge, on the contrary, by shewing
how much we have yet to learn, and the very
limited extent of our powers and capacity, helps

the persons the author describes, and expressive
 us to counteract the force of our natural vanity,
 and thereby serves to keep us humble. Nothing
 renders a woman so hateful to her own sex, and
 so unpalatable to ours, as that self-sufficiency
 and pride, which are but too apt to attend up-
 on the acquisition of such arts or sciences, as
 are unbecoming her sex, and for which nature
 never designed her. For this reason it is, that
 while I endeavour to extend the knowledge of
 my pupils, beyond what the ordinary methods
 of education will permit, I have ever made *that*
 of their *own hearts* the principal point to which
 every other branch of my instruction tends, be-
 ing well assured, that nothing can so much con-
 tribute to their happiness in after life.

It is universally allowed, that the sentiments
 and opinions we early imbibe, are generally so
 rooted in the mind, as to accompany us through
 life. The traces of a defective education are,
 perhaps, never to be *wholly obliterated*. The
 being early initiated into good company, gives
 us a certain degree of complacency, and good
 manners, that neither time nor misfortune is
 able to eradicate. In every action the gentle-
 woman would appear, though it might be en-

devoured to imitate a *contrary* character with studied sedulity. It is the same thing with respect to the sentiments we entertain, which will be noble and elegant, or base and vulgar, in proportion as we have been accustomed to contemplate objects of either kind, from whence they have their birth. Sublime and magnificent objects, naturally inspire those who study them, with elevated sentiments; which is one reason why the most *elegant* authors should be early read, and their beauties impressed upon the mind. She who, when young, has been accustomed to relish and understand the sentiments and reflections of the best writers, will not easily be betrayed into reading such contemptible trash, as is daily issued from the press, for the emolument of circulating libraries; and which has, perhaps, contributed to render more of our young women miserable, than all the other methods of seduction put together.

The sentiments, reflections, and images, of such authors as Young, or Milton, though they may not appear to produce any effect at the time they are first read, will not fail to make a deep impression on the mind and memory, when properly

properly explained and enforced; especially as verse is so much more easily retained than prose. Besides, the reading good verse is naturally attended with pleasure; and, according to the poet

proportion as we have been accustomed to con-

A verse may find him who a sermon flies

And turn delight into a sacrifice.

objects, naturally inspire those who study them,

It may possibly be objected, however, that, ad-

mitting the books above-mentioned to be ever

so well calculated to open the mind, and im-

prove the understanding, yet the time allotted

for the purpose of reading them, must be so lit-

tle, where so many other articles of education

are to be attended to; and the language of the

authors, as well as the subjects they treat of,

so much above the comprehension of ladies at

such an early time of life, that it seems highly

improbable they can be read with such a degree

of attention, as to enable the pupil to compre-

hend the language sufficiently to feel the senti-

ments they were written to inculcate; and that

without feeling them, no impression can be made

upon the *understanding*.

time they are first read, when

deep impression on the mind and memory, when

properly

These objections must be allowed to have weight; though far from being unanswerable. Were they strictly just, they would equally apply to the acquisition of any degree of knowledge, during the time children are at school. It must be owned, that to understand the language, or comprehend the sentiments of such authors, in any tolerable degree, seems, at first view, and by the ordinary methods of instruction, much to exceed the *bounds of probability*: (and if we were to consider the art of teaching to read, as confined to the pronunciation of *mere words*, utterly *impossible*;) But when we extend our idea of it, as comprehending the expression of the passions by proper tones, and of the sense by just emphases, the task appears still more difficult and laborious; and such as will render every assistance necessary, that the mind can possibly receive in its first attempts to acquire knowledge. It will not, therefore, be sufficient, barely to instruct the pupil in the knowledge of *words only*, but of the *things signified by them*. Some general idea of the sciences must be attained, to enable them to comprehend the several figures, metaphors, similes, and allusions, that adorn the writings of our

4

poets,

poets, and are drawn from natural and experimental philosophy. Nor is it possible, without some previous information, with respect to the mind itself, and its various faculties, a young lady should have such a knowledge, even of the terms made use of by writers on moral, or theological subjects, as will enable her to reap any great degree of instruction, much less delight, from the perusal of them.

These, therefore, are to be supplied by *other means* than the bare exercise of *reading*.

The reading books is, indeed, a great *help* to knowledge; but of very little effect in improving the mind, if not assisted by *conversation*. Dr. Young, in his Night Thoughts, has so beautifully expressed this sentiment, that I cannot help quoting him.

Haſt thou no friend to ſet thy *mind* abroad?

Good ſenſe will ſtagnate; thoughts ſhut up,

want air,

And ſpoil, like bales unopen'd to the ſun.—

Thought in the mine, may come forth gold,
or dross;

When coin'd in *word*, we know its *real* worth—
 Thought too, *deliver'd*, is the more *possest*;
 Teaching, we *learn*, and giving, we *retain*
 The births of intellect; when dumb, forgot.
 Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field;
 Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
 Of due restraint, and emulation's spur
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.
 'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,
 As exercise for salutary rest:
 By *that* untutor'd, contemplation *raves*;
 And *nature's* fool, by *wisdom's* is outdone.

My auditors will easily recollect, with how much more facility they understand what passes in discourse, than what is written. Words are but the mere *carcase* of a language, (if I may venture to use the expression) the tone, look, and gesture, with which they are delivered, give life, vigour, and energy, and are the very soul and spirit of it. We should much sooner comprehend the meaning of an author, who should converse with us upon any subject, than if we were to read the *same thoughts*, even though he should make use of the very words to express his ideas in *writing*, as he would in *conversation*.

For

For this reason it is, that instead of directing my scholars to read a number of authors, for which the attention to the other parts of their education would not allow them sufficient time, or that might have a tendency to give them higher notions, or a more extensive knowledge of science, than is suitable to, or becoming in, their sex; two afternoons in the week are set apart for the purpose of instructing them by *conversation*, and of applying, explaining, and enforcing what they have read; or of giving them such information, as may be applicable to some other good purpose. At these times, it is endeavoured in the most perspicuous language, to give them every elegant and praise-worthy improvement, of which the female mind is susceptible, requiring, as it does, the most tender and delicate cultivation; and to ground them in the knowledge and principles of morality and religion. When morality is the subject, the necessity of practising the duties of it, and the difference between these, and those of *religious* obligation, are discussed in the most ample manner. When religion becomes an object of consideration, the nature, end, and importance of it, together with the difference between the *na-*
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tural and *revealed*, is explained to them in the most familiar language, and set in the strongest point of view : But, above all, the obligations we are under to become intimately acquainted with the several duties it enjoins us, in order to a right performance of them, and the source from whence that knowledge is to be derived, is impressed upon their hearts and understandings, by every method that can possibly affect the one, or enlighten the other : nor, at such times, is the mind forgot, nor the means by which it is furnished with ideas, and the proper use and employment of its several faculties, from the act of simple perception, to that of reasoning, and the determinations of the judgment. In short, no means are left untried, that may serve to implant just notions of the dignity and importance of cultivating the faculties, and amending the heart.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood, when I talk of instructing my pupils in the sciences, as if I endeavoured to render them female philosophers. I am duly sensible what a pernicious effect it would have upon society, were they to be accurately skilled in such branches of science, as
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would unavoidably take them off from, or render them averſe to, thoſe domeſtic duties and employments, for which Heaven ſo evidently deſigned them. All I mean, is no more than to give them ſuch a knowledge of the elementary principles of each, as may enable them to underſtand the authors they read.

A woman may know ſo much of natural hiſtory, as not to be terrified to a great degree at the noiſe of thunder; or to faint at the ſight of a harmleſs infect, without being an adept in it. She may be ſo informed, as to acquire a tolerable idea of the heavenly ſyſtem, without any danger of employing herſelf in telling fortunes, or calculating eclipses: but it is ſcarcely poſſible for one ſo inſtructed, not to entertain more adequate and rational ideas of the majeſty, excellence, and infinite power of her Creator; which will be of much greater ſervice to her, than any knowledge ſhe could poſſibly acquire, were the time that is ſpent in this way, to be applied to any other purpoſes.

It is to be obſerved, that no particular times are ſet apart for the purpoſe of introducing or explaining

explaining any of these subjects. The formality of attending upon lectures of this kind, would create a listlessness and disregard to the subjects to be discussed. On the contrary, the opportunities are seized, when their minds seem to be disposed for the one, or the other; or as occasion may invite the mention of them; nor are they continued longer than it is evidently agreeable to the pupils to hear them with attention. They are frequently requested to give their opinions upon any point, to dissent from what may appear to contradict their own; and to put any such questions, or propose any subject, upon which they would wish to be informed. Nor is less care taken that their inattention, natural timidity, or the fear that a worse opinion should be entertained of them than they could wish, should lead them to acquiesce in any opinion, or sentiment, by declaring that they *do* comprehend it when they *do not*. This would be *fatal* to the understanding both on the account of the indulgence it affords to the natural *indolence* of the mind, which does not love the toil of thinking; as well as by encouraging it to depend upon the authority of *others* for the truth of the notions it entertains; which ought to be the
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result of its *own industry*. They are, therefore, not only strictly examined in this respect, but encouraged to require repeated explanations, till they clearly understand the force of the argument, or the propriety of the sentiment proposed to them: but that there may be no possible *deception* in this case, as well as that they may be enabled to express their thoughts on paper, with propriety, they are required to deliver their sentiments in writing, upon different themes or subjects. These are adapted to their several ages and capacities, as nearly as possible, (for which purposes they are ranged into different classes) beginning with those things they most readily comprehend, and encreasing the difficulty of the themes as they improve, and rise from class to class. The exercises are written every week, in the presence of proper persons, whose business and strict charge it is, that they be neither permitted the use of any books, while they are writing them; nor to assist each other in their compositions: when finished, they are to be corrected, with respect to the inaccuracy of the language, impropriety of sentiment, or the orthographical, or grammatical errors that may be found in them; and these are severally

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pointed out. When the sentiments are tolerably just, but delivered without order or method, they are instructed in what manner each thought would naturally have resulted from the other, and the order in which their ideas should have been arranged. If the sentiment be totally false, or the sense of the theme has been mistaken, they are carefully set right in both particulars. After the letters have been corrected, they are delivered to a person, who takes care of them till the pupils go home for the holidays, at which time they are sealed up, and sent to their friends, that they may have an opportunity of tracing the improvements they have made, and of forming some judgment of their industry, or inattention, as well as of the method pursued for their instruction.

I am now come nearly to the conclusion of this lecture; which I am afraid has been thought rather too long: But the diffusiveness of my subject would not admit of my further abridging it. I hope it has appeared to my audience, that it has for its object the good of society. In youth, when the mind is most susceptible of impression, the greatest care should be taken to inculcate the principles of morality and religion; and when
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this has been neglected, but very little can be expected to be done in after life, when the passions, for a series of years, have been permitted to ravage the heart without check or controul.—It cannot therefore be illaudable, to attempt to establish a restraint upon them, that will, gradually, it is to be hoped, grow more and more strong, as the reason matures, and as the experience of the world, at the same time that it brings home to the woman, the truth of the maxims she learned while a girl, improves her understanding, and enables it to discern the reasonableness, and necessity, of making them the rule of her conduct.

The general and loud complaints against the common methods of school instruction, seem to invite a serious attention to a plan of this kind. A plan, not founded upon speculation, which however ingenious and plausible, might be liable to create fears of, and objections to, its practicability; but which has actually been reduced to practice, under different stages of improvement, with success, for near twenty years. I beg leave to observe, that it is not offered to the public as the most perfect that might be

formed, were there sufficient time allowed, or encouragement given for the improvement of it. The discouragements I have met with in the prosecution of the plan, from persons, who having only a partial knowledge, have misrepresented it, as well as from those, who making a *trade* of education, and reaping sufficient profits from the *old methods*, would neither be at the trouble of going out of the road they had been accustomed to, nor permit others to lead them into a better, have been so great, that they ought to apologize for any thing that may appear to be wanting. Indeed it would never have been carried to the present extent, or have seen the light, but for the generous assistance and encouragement my limited endeavours for the public good have lately met with.

I AM sorry, however, to be obliged to say, that but *too little time* is allotted for the Ladies to make such a proficiency under my care, as they might do, if they were to begin at a more early age. One, or two years, is a very short space to effect the great ends of furnishing the mind with just ideas of moral and religious rectitude; and of correcting the ill habits of think-

ing, speaking, and, let me say, of acting, that have been acquired under a course of *defective* education, for a series of eight or nine. Yet it has not been uncommon to have ladies sent from other schools, to finish their education under my care, whose minds have been *totally uninformed* in these respects; and with whom, from the ill habits previously contracted, it is far more difficult to succeed, than with those who have never been under any course of instruction at all: and it often happens, that when a lady thus situated, has overcome the difficulties of a first attempt at improvement, and, beginning to perceive the advantages that lie before her, becomes solicitous of attaining them, she is deprived of a course of instruction, that, perhaps, she may never have time, or opportunity, to resume.

Children cannot too soon be taught to articulate, and to acquire a just and elegant pronunciation, (no contemptible accomplishment) since, as has been already observed, almost all the ill habits of speech are acquired in their very early years: nor can they be too early initiated into
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the method of using their faculties, and employing them upon objects worthy the consideration of a rational being; and upon which the future happiness of their lives will so much depend. They begin to compare ideas, and to reflect, much sooner than is generally supposed; and therefore it is of the utmost consequence, that their faculties should be properly directed, while thus unfolding themselves: as the prejudices, and wrong modes of thinking, which we early imbibe, strengthen with age, and are those we last and least care to part with.

I do not foresee any other objection that may be made to the method recommended, except the following may be thought so; viz. That such a course of education as has been pointed out, may be rather prejudicial than otherwise, to those who are destined to move in an humble sphere of life. To this it may be answered, that it is by no means designed to be extended indiscriminately to all ranks of persons; but only to those whose birth, or fortune, may render it eligible and necessary; or to such as may hereafter be concerned in the education of their own sex: and, certainly, there can be no impropriety in

in giving them every assistance they can possibly derive from education ; since none but a gentlewoman can properly educate a gentlewoman. She is but little qualified, indeed, to excite or inspire noble or refined sentiments in others, who is incapable of feeling or understanding them herself.

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